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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [EAID](#) [HO](#)

SUBJECT: TFH01: HONDURAS COUP: POLITICAL WRAP-UP 08/06/09

REF: A. TEGUCIGALPA 699

[1](#)B. TEGUCIGALPA 700

[1](#)C. TEGUCIGALPA 703

Classified By: Ambassador Hugo Llorens, reasons 1.4 (d)

[1](#)1. (U) This is another in a series of daily round-ups of political news in the aftermath of the June 28 forcible removal and exile of President Manuel Zelaya from Honduras.

[1](#)2. (U) The letter from Assistant Secretary Richard Verma to Senator Lugar is being portrayed in Honduran media as a "softening" of U.S. support for President Mel Zelaya. Media highlighted that the letter rejected calls for "crippling economic sanctions." Media also highlighted Zelaya's statement that the U.S. reaction had been "tepid."

[1](#)3. (C) Canadian Ambassador Neil Reeder, UN Representative Rebeca Arias, and Embassy PolOff (the G-16 "Troika", representing past, current, and future chairs) met August 5 with members of the National Congress. The troika stressed the importance of the San Jose Accord and asked to clarify what Congress saw as the next steps on political amnesty. The Members of Congress expressed concern that there would be public backlash to the agreement if the populace was not prepared to accept it. More details will be reported septel.

[1](#)4. (SBU) The Group of 16 (G-16) major donors met August 5 to hear presentations from Evangelical community representatives, human rights groups and a readout on the troika's meeting with Congress from Ambassador Reeder. The Evangelical leaders expressed their support for the San Jose Accord. (Comment: Their statement reflected growing sentiment among civil society that the San Jose Accord is the best mechanism to resolve the crisis. End Comment.) Rights groups laid out their concerns regarding the state of human rights since June 28.

[1](#)5. (U) Nationalist Party presidential candidate Porfirio "Pepe" Lobo Sosa returned from the United States August 5, where he had met with political strategists and advisors on his election campaign. Upon arrival he said that a "low key dialogue" was already in process among political leaders to resolve the crisis in Honduras. EmbOff notes that this has triggered speculation of behind-the-scenes contact between the red and white teams; some Honduran political figures have criticized Lobo for this statement.

[1](#)6. (U) Local media report that additional charges have been brought by the Attorney General against Zelaya cabinet members. Edwin Araque, former Central Bank president, Jose Antonio Borjas Masis, Under-Secretary of Finance, and Jose Francisco Young, from the Ministry of Finance, are accused of aiding Enrique Flores Lanza, Secretary to the Presidency, in

obtaining an additional 10 million Lempiras from the Honduran Central Bank without following the proper mechanisms. Accusations include abuse of power and misuse of public funds.

¶7. (U) An advertisement in local media on August 5 encouraged Hondurans to "support U.S. House of Representatives Resolution No. 619," put forth by Rep. Connie Mack (R-FL), which condemns President Zelaya for his "unconstitutional and illegal attempts to alter the Constitution of Honduras." The ad stated that "U.S. and foreign investors in the Bay Islands are impressed and grateful with Honduras for their courage and independence."

¶8. (U) Preparations continue for a pro-Zelaya "megamarch" on August 11 in both Tegucigalpa and San Pedro Sula. More details on protests can be found in reftel B.

DE FACTO REGIME MODIFIES VISA CATEGORIES

¶9. (U) The de facto regime issued a statement that calls for citizens of Angola, Algeria, Cuba, Ethiopia, Ghana, Indonesia, Jordan, Libya, Mozambique, North Korea, Oman, and Western Sahara to obtain Category "C" visas, which require approval from the MFA in Tegucigalpa for issuance. On April 1, the Zelaya Administration had announced the suspension of the Category "C" visas for many of these countries. On July 21, Micheletti also announced that Category "C" visas would be re-established for citizens of Iran.

LLORENS